



Editor's Column

The PQ Editors chose creativity as the theme of this issue because it is central to our profession and particularly to writing about the work we do. In a sense, the theme of every issue of PQ is creativity. How else do we all come up with new programs, better ways of doing things, inventive outreach plans, or collections that serve the needs of so many diverse communities? The creative spark is behind all we do whether we recognize or name it as such.

Catherine Claveau Berner's "Best Job in the World" is a wonderful expression of creativity in librarianship expressed as reflections on her job as a bookmobile librarian in Fairbanks, Alaska. Berner gives us a glimpse into work that is creative, exciting, and meaningful by nature – in large part because Berner herself recognizes and celebrates its potential. We know she means it when she declares, "to me, the preparations for those Saturday runs are like getting ready for a party." On our best days, working in a library is an amazing celebration of potential and possibility.

Whether or not we feel that our librarianship is by nature creative, it is certainly true that many librarians are fortunate to promote the works of authors who exemplify the creative life and whose published works are so important to the imaginations of our readers. As Robbin Friedman writes in our "Beyond the Region" column in this issue, living in urban spaces like New York City (or Seattle!) often brings the mindful librarian into actual contact with an astounding array of creative authors. For those of us living in more rural or isolated places in the Pacific Northwest, our face to face interactions with authors may be quite infrequent. In any case it is always a thrill to hear details about our favorite authors' methods, the challenges they face, or the means they use to access their "creative well." Janet Fox, author of *Sirens*, *Forgiven*, *The Charmed Children of Rookskill Castle*, and other books for children and young adults, has contributed this issue's "The Author" column. It is a pleasure and a privilege to learn so much about the background and sources for this author's work.

Creativity in librarianship, as in many professions, is also often found in the process of discovering and recognizing problems, and then working to find solutions for them. Sometimes our jobs seem mainly focused on problem solving or on helping others develop creativity by providing options for adequate access. Stephanie Bailey-White and Roger Stewart write about this in "Improving Access to Books for Young School-age Children One Library at a Time." Their research into checkout policies for young readers in Idaho libraries laid the groundwork for a state-wide grant program that provided funds for collection development and greater access for children to those collections.

Underlying our creativity, however, a bedrock of authenticity is essential. The new librarian is entering our profession at a time of great change and, hence, great opportunity for creativity. In "The Mentor," Tracy Bicknell-Holmes, reminds the prospective job applicant that analytical skills are necessary to land that great job, that perhaps being too creative in describing your abilities may not be the best step: "In fact, the search committee will likely look for evidence that you have all the skills you claimed to have." While there are times when it's good to curb your creativity, "The Luddite Librarian" admonishes us to "be reflective and identify the moments when you are most creative." Then go for it!

Jan and Leila, editors